

Twice a Month!



messing about in **BOATS**

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about in

BOATS



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BOB
HICKS

COMMENTARY

A couple of issues ago I commented on some reader suggestions that I try to take up some of the slack that exists in small boat media with the conversion of the former "Small Boat Journal" into a power boat magazine. I explained at that time the difference in scale between what I do and what they did, but said I would be open to developing more of the "regular features" sort of thing on boats, gear, and ideas, if the material was to turn up here in sufficient quantity.

I have had further interesting input from readers in response to these remarks. Some are the techies who are into all the building and working on stuff with hardly a glance at articles about people paddling or rowing or sailing somewhere. Then there are those apparently quite content with the present format we provide, urging me to not try to become another "SBJ". The most common thread that runs through comments on renewal order forms is, "Don't change a thing!"

Well, I don't intend to make any sea changes in "Boats", but it has changed in detail as the issues pile up. With over 200 now behind us, a look back over several years shows that changes have taken place. The overall format has not changed much but details come and go. The very amorphous nature of the format is attractive to me, I would be bored if I knew what was going to be in the next several issues coming up. I like to serialize sometimes, if I have something suitable. I like to run some old time reprints from time to time. Most of all, though, I like to run your stories about what you are doing. And not just technical stuff, but the on-the-water stuff also.

As it happens I tend to spend more of my own time tinkering with my boats rather than paddling or sailing them. But I decided way back that if that was all there was

to messing about in boats, I would not need any magazines, but just a collection of existing books that can tell me anything I want to know about working on boats. I still have a few that are germane to my own particular interests, but have also read dozens of others over the past 15 or so years since I first discovered what fun this is, and I know that running technical stuff in a periodical is wasting space, as it is much more fully treated in books. And new books are constantly coming out on the subject of working on boats.

Where I do like to bring in what technical material I do is in the stories you send me on what you did, and how you did it. This introduces the human interest side that relieves the tedium of textbook how-to material. These stories also often bring out novel ways and original thinking that may not be found in the texts. And best of all, I like to hear about how whatever it is that you built or restored or whatever, works on the water afterwards, being used.

Next issue I'll give you a look at the array of articles already piled up here that will be turning up in our 1992 issues. There's an impressive variety and it grows weekly. As the magazine gains readers and advertising support, we contemplate the time arriving when we have to add another eight pages (the minimum financially feasible increase in size due to printing constraints). If we do enlarge it, when we can afford to do so, we still won't be changing its nature, just giving you more. Whatever may happen as to our taking up the slack from "SBJ's" demise, we won't become another consumer magazine. I would guess that instead of that, we'd just gather in those most useful and informative aspects of that former source for small boat nuts nationwide.

Our Next Issue...

Will feature Roland Evans "Journey of the Steamboat Tryall" that didn't fit into this issue, along with Dick Winslow's report on "The Baker River Bunch", a fall canoe outing. Scott Wolfe tells us in detail about building the classic "Moth" and reports on that boat's annual regatta in North Carolina. Larry Sedgewick's "Building my Baidarka" will finally make it, and will be accompanied by Steve Hansens's "Building my Bolger Pirogue". We'll look at Mac McCarthy's success at building strip canoes at his Feather Canoes, and Dave Mainwaring will take us on a short tour of small maritime museums. We plan to begin another of Gail Ferris' kayak expedition reports, this one a solo visit to Barrow, Alaska, the most northwestern point of North America, where two arctic oceans meet.

On the Cover...

Can he be serious? The tiny tug "Seaview II" noses up to the imposing "Russell, Jr." at the Boston Tugboat Muster, presumably to engage in a pushing contest. Lots of tug stuff in this issue from Hugh Ware.



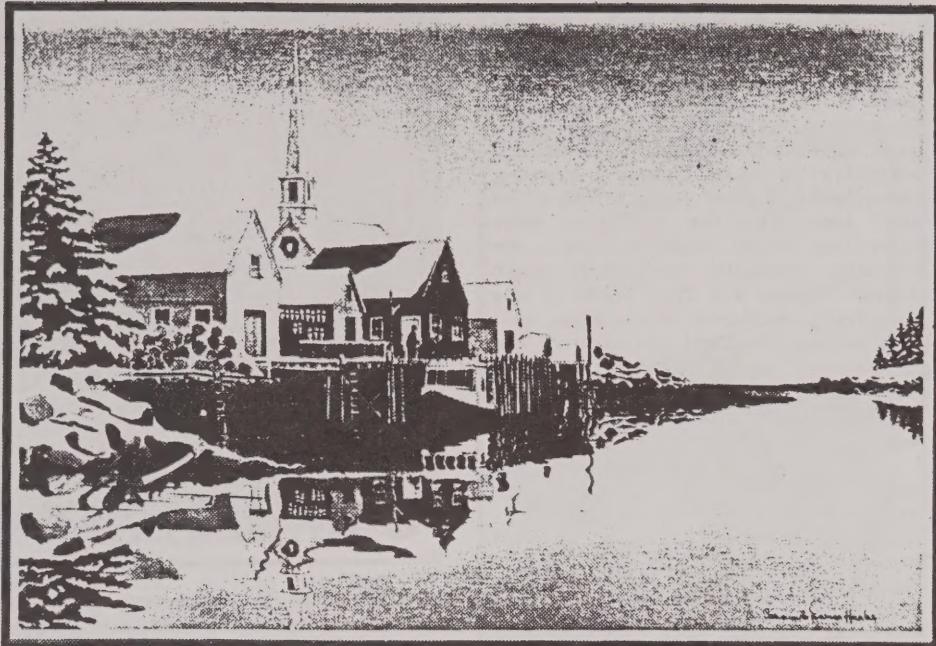
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FINEST KIND OF TIME

I've been having the finest kind of time paddling my new Sealution SS sea kayak. What a pleasure it is to paddle a slim, sleek, Greenland style kayak that is quick and agile, yet possesses enough stability to make constant bracing unnecessary. Most kayaks I've tried that look like the Sealution have very low initial stability and a secondary stability that isn't much better. These are fine boats if one has truly mastered the eskimo roll and enjoys frequent visits with the fascinating creatures that inhabit the world just below the water's surface. Otherwise they tend to be anxiety arousing.

I talked with a woman at the Jersey Paddler's annual demo day and symposium on Barnegat Bay. She told me that paddling was all she really wanted to do and, as soon as her children were on their own, that was exactly what she was going to do. I told her that she suffered from a terrible addiction. "A wonderful addiction", was her reply.

She brought to mind a recent article in "Boats" about Jack Gates and his little sailing canoe, "Magic Piccolo". Having launched this cockleshell some 600 times in the past two years, Jack is certainly afflicted with this addiction, as are many of us who subscribe to "Boats". Robert Baker designed "Piccolo" as a "yacht for the common man", and that seems a key idea. Small boats are attainable and the pleasures they bring are easily achievable.

I once owned a diesel auxiliary sloop with a keel so deep that you couldn't see bottom even after you ran hard aground, which happened with some frequency. It took a couple of hours to set her up for a weekend cruise and that much again to leave her shipshape afterwards. In New Jersey in the summer one does not cruise in the traditional sense of that word; one competes for such thing as deep water anchorages and the right of way in dredged channels with a lot of people who haven't the slightest notion of what right of way means. I sold the sloop at considerable loss in mid-August one summer, close to twenty years ago, and I have not owned a boat over 18' since.

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SMALL

I am glad to state that my "Boat Wanted" idea ("Boats" Aug. 15, 1991) has resulted in correspondence with several builders. I've been defining my perfect boat through these contacts and am making some friends along the way. I hope to meet all these people in time.

I'd like to comment on the cost of obtaining such information. The builders are in business to make money as we acknowledge and are limited as to what they can offer without charge, obviously. However a prospective buyer needs to get some kind of feeling for how well his ideas mesh with those of the builders without having to lay out sizeable amounts of dollars up front. As a prospective buyer, I had little desire to send out \$5 checks for booklets of plans that may not contain anything of interest to me.

I think these independent builders need a more effective and low cost way to meet prospective buyers. A "Boats Wanted Built" column in your magazine would certainly help, as my request has helped me, but low cost follow-up is needed. Perhaps someone could organize a series of booklets, each based on a different type of boat, listing all builders who offer to build that particular type. The prospective buyer could send one small check to one central location and receive one booklet listing builders of the specified type of boat. For instance, if I were looking for a dory, my one check and letter would bring me a directory of all builders offering to build a dory.

This would require the builders to cooperate in supplying data to a centralized location, but in the long run could result in more business as it helps bring them together with customers.

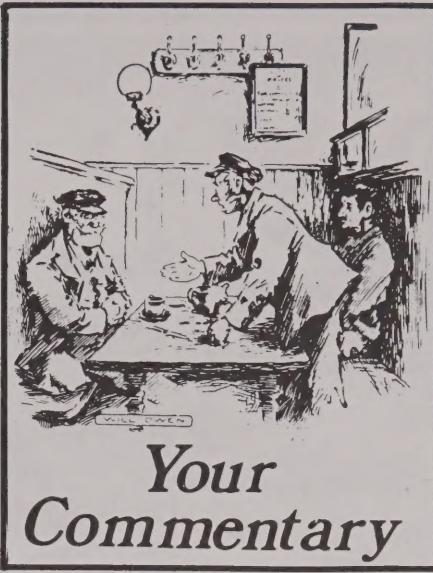
John Smith, 194 Greylock Pkwy, Belleville, NJ 07109.

A HERCULEAN TASK

Here is my renewal for another year, I have been with you since you started (subscriber #178, ED.), and when I get my copy (usually late) amongst the bills, I get immediately into a good mood and dive right into it. You make my day.

I often think of you all by yourself banging out the next issue and think of it being a Herculean task. What do you do when you are feeling sick? I can't imagine that you can say "the hell with it, I'm not going to do this next issue!". What do you do?

Anyway, stay well so I won't have to miss your wonderful work. Al Benusen, New York, NY.



Your Commentary

And so it has come down to this; a sixteen-and-a-half foot, forty-five pound kayak and an Alden shell, with thinking now about a second hand canoe that could be adapted to rowing from both sliding and fixed seats, with enough volume to carry a passenger.

The infamous New Jersey "boat aimer", throttling his mega-horsepower marine missile, is pretty much gone from the scene now and won't re-appear again until next summer. Those left, fisher-folk and sailors mostly, are decent sorts who appreciate the right to a good day on the water. So let our season begin.

"Boats" has become a point of light for those of us who mess about in small craft. Thank you.

John Myers, Monmouth Beach, NJ.

AFTER 58 YEARS

Again a cover photo hit home for me meaningful to my sailing. The July 1st cover shows two dories in the gut between Conomo Point and Cross Island on the Essex River in Essex, Massachusetts, even showing the stone foundations of the inn that was on Cross Island. My uncle introduced me to sailing right there in 1933 from Robbins Island, just a high spot in the salt marsh, in a Swampscott dory with a sprit sail. I can still see that scene in my mind's eye after 58 years. I didn't get my own boat until 1964, 30 years after.

Bob Harris, Sunset, ME.

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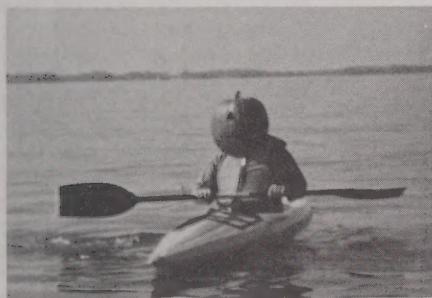


START 'EM YOUNG

Here's a photo of my nephew, Ben Thompson, skippering his new rocking dory I designed and built for him. He's only 15 months old but instinctively knew what it was for and how to work it. I'll be building a lapstrake plywood skiff next, but because I'm lazy, it will

be fitted for sailing as well as rowing. It's called an Acorn Skiff, designed by Iain Oughtred, and is 11'9" LOA. The strongback's done and the molds are in progress. Now all I need is more spare time and more spare money (don't we all).

Clive Spedding, Hudson, NH.,



HALLOWEEN TALE

It was a fine fall day this past Halloween so I decided to mess about in my kayak on Alton Lake on the Mississippi River just north of St. Louis, MO. While paddling along enjoying the fall colors, I suddenly felt an acute headache. When this had passed, I noticed my reflection in the water. My head had turned into a huge pumpkin! I was looking at the world through triangular eyes and had this silly grin on my orange face.

It wasn't until I had gone home and locked myself in my house out of public view watching tv that, on the stroke of midnight, my head returned to its normal size and handsome shape.

David Allen, Godfrey, IL.

PROMISE FULFILLED

On of the things I promised myself last winter and spring while I was in Saudi Arabia was to build a small rowing/sailing boat light enough to cartop when I got back home. Well, I did it, and a story will be forthcoming in the future. Boy, did I miss "Messing About" while I was over there.

Mike Kent, Columbus, OH.

WHAT A YEAR!

Blasphemy, racism, bad poetry, outraged indignation, and the "Incredible Beach Hauler". What a year, and twice a month at that. You've certainly come of age.

The other magazine had a dandy article by Peter Spectre on alternative methods of material procurement, akin to what we in our youth called, "Midnight Auto Supply". Perhaps he could be induced to contribute an occasional piece to "Boats", a suitable forum for his unpretentious style.

It was good to see Tony Davis and his Arey's Pond Boatyard in a recent issue. Integrity, courtesy and enthusiasm should ensure his success.

Bill Woodhead, Charlestown, MA.

ED. NOTE: Peter Spectre has to earn a living and writing is how he does it, with commitments to several publications that pay handsomely for his work. He's a great booster for us but "pro bono" writing for us would be too much to ask.

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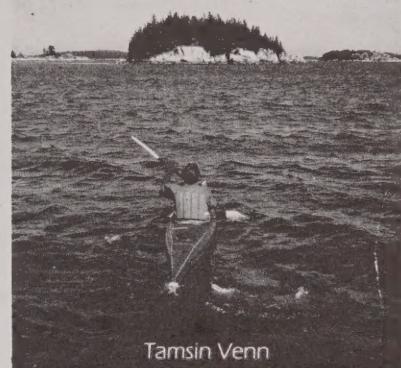
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1991 BOSTON HARBOR TUGBOAT MUSTER AND PARADE



We were on the "Jason Reinauer", one of Boston Fuel Transportation's trim tugs, as guests of Captain "Jake" Tibbets for the Seventh Boston Harbor Tugboat Festival. It was an August Saturday morning, the weather was bright and sunny and we had our cameras ready. "We" were Matt and Judy Lyon in from Richland, Washington, with their 1992 version of their "Tugboat & Towboat" calendar, my wife, our middle son (the one who did a high-school project on Boston tugs and knew the "Jason" when it was Boston Towboat's "Walton"), and this reporter, along with other guests.

Our hosts on the "Jason" were Captain George Toomey and Mate Curt Duane, nearly identical in build, mustaches, Boston Fuel T-shirts and shorts, plus a crew of two deckhands and two engineers ("two shifts, six on, six off, for ten days").

...but First...

But we were not at the moment headed for the Muster. "We need a fourth boat for a job first," said the dispatcher, explaining that Coast Guard regulations require the presence of several tugs when a tanker goes up Chelsea Creek, a dog-legged, narrow passage that is lined with many of Boston's oil terminals and tank farms. We were thrilled, for this meant we would be on a tug at work. This would be a first for most of us, and wondrous indeed.

So the "Jason" headed down harbor to where the tugs "Karen Tibbets" and "Vincent D. Tibbets, Jr." idled near Logan Airport. Far down the harbor the tanker "Overseas Philadelphia" approached with "Matthew Tibbets" close alongside after putting the docking

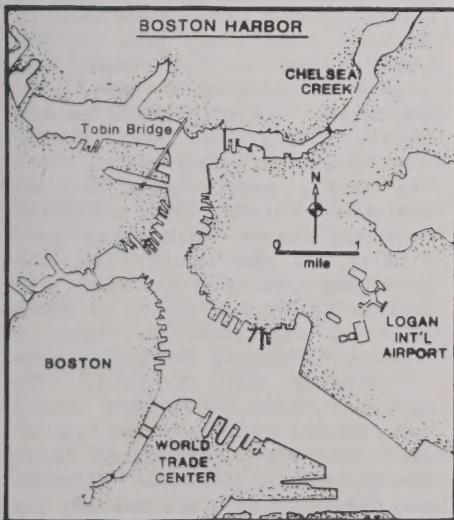
pilot on board. Off to starboard, we could see tugs gathering at the World Trade Center for the Muster, which would start in about an hour.

We joined the two waiting tugs, which had put nose unto nose and were trying to discover which one was weaker today. Then we took our turn at a push, pitting "Jason's" 2,000hp against "Vincent's" 3,000hp, with predictable results.

Soon the tanker drew near. It was good-sized for going up the Creek, some 42,600 deadweight tons, but partly loaded today and only drawing 26'. It was nice to learn that it had a double bottom to protect the already polluted Boston harbor in case of mishap.

We moved in just off the stern to starboard with "Karen" close by to port, both of us ready for action if needed. The little convoy would travel up the harbor, turn right just before reaching the towering Tobin Bridge full of Saturday morning traffic, and head up into Chelsea Creek.

Each bridge rose in plenty of time and the tanker slid through them nicely. The trip was routine and "Overseas Philadelphia" needed little help. "Karen" did give a short push to help the tanker line up for the second bridge but that assistance may not have been necessary. I couldn't see what the two front tugs were doing. Probably not much because they had to scoot out of the way to allow the tanker to slide through the creek's two narrow bridges. As soon as "Philadelphia" was through the second bridge, we spun on our stern and reversed course. As we steamed out to join the Muster, we passed Boston Line & Service's trim little "Eileen C." on her way to take ashore the tanker's heavy mooring lines.



Opposite page: "Karen Tibbets" at work. Above from top: The tugs pull aside as the tanker slides through the bridge. "Eileen C." hurries up to handle the docking lines. "Jason Reinauer" was our "press boat" at this year's Muster.

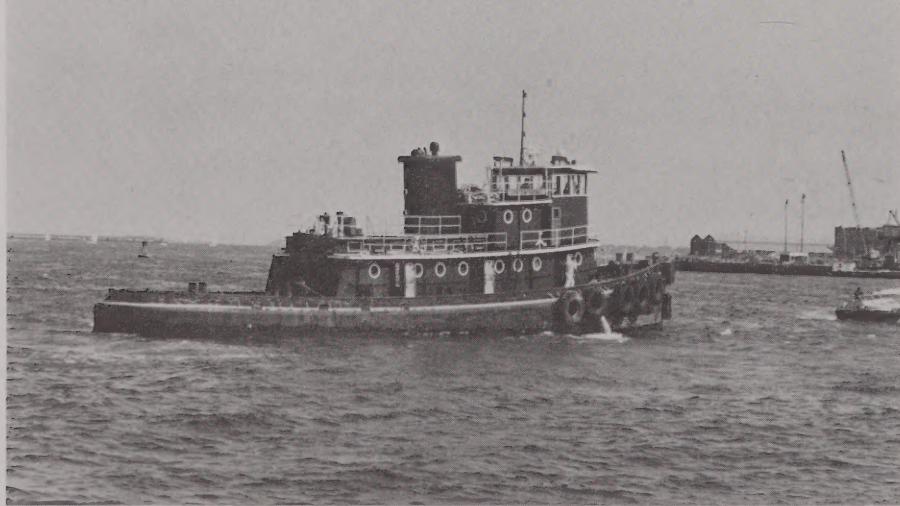
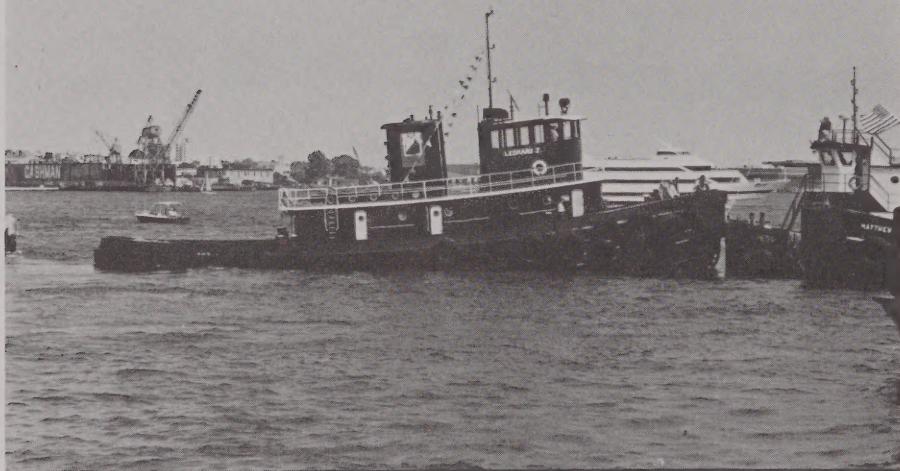
Now, on to the Muster

The Muster is an annual event, sponsored by the Boston/New England Chapter of the World Ship Society. As the title implies, it is a get-together for tugs and their crews, a chance to see the face behind the voice on the radio, an opportunity to push against a rival once again to see whose tug is mightier this year. In earlier years, tugs have made the trip to the Muster from Maine, southern Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and tugs that happened to be in port with a coastwise tow have also attended. All tugs are welcomed.

When we joined up, the parade had already started. We fell in at the end behind the gray and black "Nauset", an old tug that had been made into someone's family recreation vehicle (the professionals didn't like the way the upper deck had been continued out to the stern as a canopy, but it was neatly done). At the front of the long column of about twenty vessels was the Boston Fire Department's "Firefighter" doing its traditional water curtain act. As the parade reversed course at each end of the harbor, we could inspect and photograph each of the tugs as it passed.

Pride of the parade was the stately old "Saturn" of Eastern Towboat, obviously steam powered when younger. It was freshly and beautifully painted in a carefully considered color scheme of cream, gold, two shades of green and black. Even the tire bumpers along its sides were matched, all of the same size and type. "Saturn" looked gorgeous and belied its radio nickname of "Satan". It would win the award as "Best Big Tug". The smaller "C.E. Cenac, Jr." also looked refreshed and would win "Best Small Tug".

Bay State Towing had their big ex-Coast Guard tug "Russell, Jr." there but the Bay State Pier was almost empty. I wondered where the rest of the fleet was, especially "Joey", my host tug last year. "Adam J.", a "Best Small Tug" in bygone years, and fleet-mate "Guido", looked as trim as ever. "Big Toot" and "Viking" and "Quenames", last year's "Best Big Tug", and "Agnes G." and Cashman's little "Big Whizzer" (without Muster Chairwoman Jamie Findlay at the wheel, she must have been ashore at the Trade Center) passed in review. Two thirds of that irrepressible trio of "Success" (looking forward as usual to pushing with "Guido"), "Fort Andrews", and "Peddock's Island" were there, but where was the latter? Then Salem's pushboat "Emily Anne" and blue-housed "Hudson" and "Shipside #9", a little tug that



Above from the top: "Saturn" was "Best Big Tug" this year. Bay State Towing's "Leonard J." Cashman's "Staten Island" is an old New York railroad tug.

adds a splash of color every time I see it, and more yet.

Smallest in the parade by far was a saucy little toy tug, beautifully detailed down to a model radar atop the pilothouse, that came all the way down from New Hampshire (probably on a trailer). The skipper of "Seawise 18" peered out of his wheelhouse about thigh-high as the little craft bucked the wakes of the other tugs. His crew stood in the open door at the aft end of the deckhouse and somebody reported he was bailing!

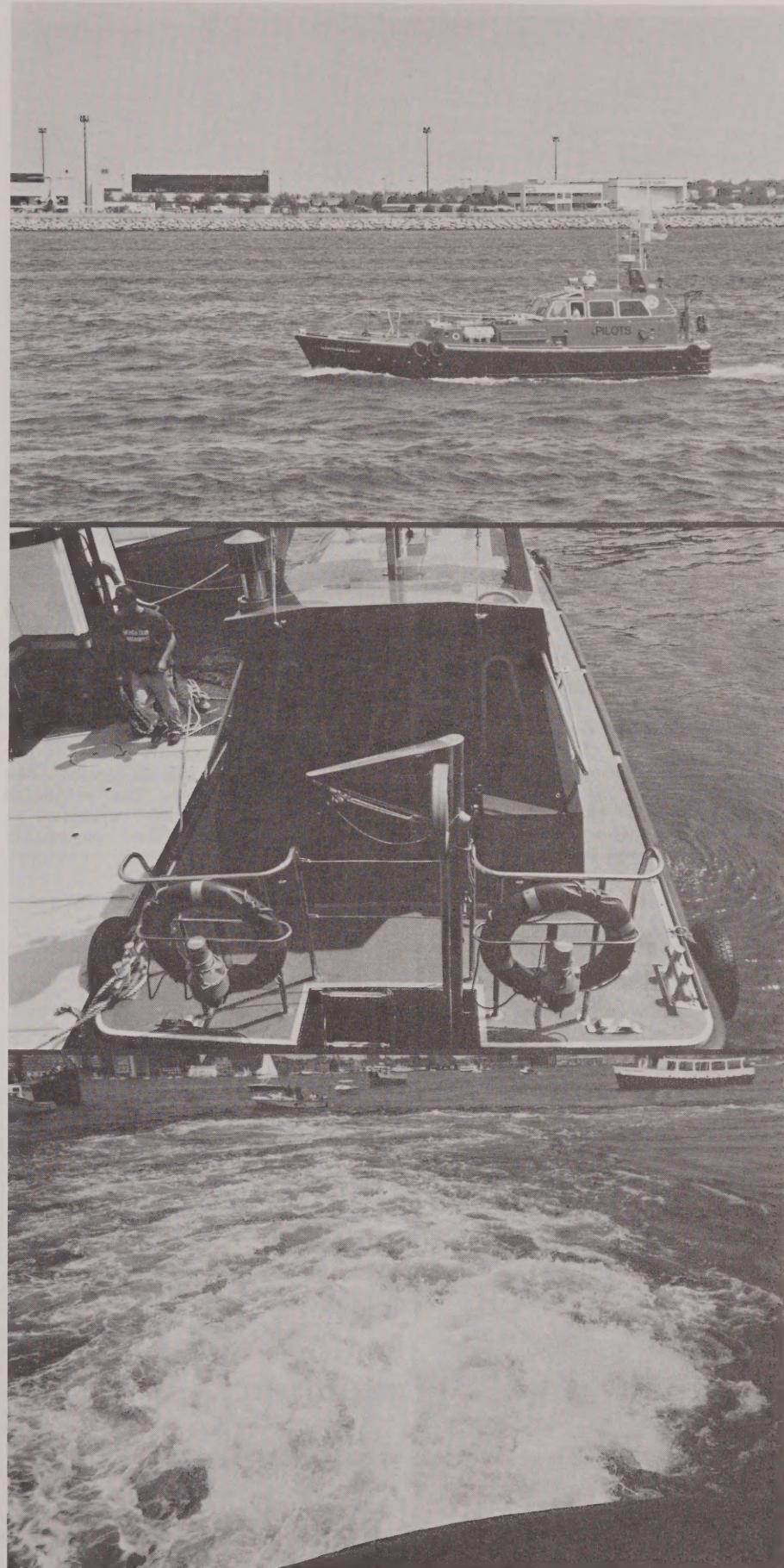
I looked for the usual entrants from Rhode Island and Cape Cod, especially the new "Bay Star", which was supposed to be finished in time to attend, but none had made the trip. Someone clued me as to "why" with the single word, "salvage", and I remembered that Hurricane Bob had left them with plenty of work to do.

The Environmental Police boat "Jessie" escorted the fleet as usual, but the Boston Pilots' representative this year was their new pilot boat "Northern Light", noticeable with its shiny international orange superstructure. Boston Harbor Cruises entered a bold red launch, the "Alison". A goodly percentage of the nearly 60 tugs in the greater Boston area had made it, but numbers were not up to those of earlier years.

But these low numbers didn't stay low. All day more tugs kept appearing from nowhere. Bay State's big "Leonard J." came in after a job, as did BFT's "Matthew Tibbets" and "H.J. Reinauer". Jamie's mates wanted to support her, so they brought over Cashman's big "Captain Eric". They tried to bring over another tug, the old New York railroad tug "Staten Island", but its diesel engine wouldn't start. So the gang piled into "Whizzer", zipped across the harbor, and soon returned with "Staten Island". Hail Hail, the (Cashman) Gang Was All There!

The pushing contests after the parade can only be described by a word I used last year, "frenzied". I didn't keep track of the multitudinous pairings and two-against-ones, but I did spot the 18 feet of "Seaside 18" seemingly challenging the 110 foot "Russell Jr." to a push (I don't know if it came off). I do know we pushed against "Quenames" (1,800hp) and our 2,000hp was slightly more effective. Horsepower ratings usually tell who will be the victor, but the presence or absence of nozzles around the propellers, or whether the propellers turn clockwise or counterclockwise can sometimes make a difference. Then "Jason" tied up at the World Trade Center and we went ashore.

The pier had a good crowd and the usual canopied tables with artists selling their tug pictures, tug



Above from the top: The new Boston harbor pilot boat, "Northern Light". A look into its cockpit. View astern as "Jason Reinauer" goes head-to-head with another tug.



"Russell Jr." has a future skipper in the pilothouse maybe?

photos and tug-related nautical doodads. There was one new feature. The Marine Modellers Club of N.E. had a booth with some good looking tug models on display, while nearby a temporary pool held several tug models busy being maneuvered by radio control.

We met Jim McAllister (now there's a tug company name, his grandfather was the founder of that famous tug line) and Fred Reep of the Tugboat Enthusiasts Society of

Long Island. We, of course, traded tug watching talk. They called the Muster "thrilling".

Around the corner of the pier were tied some of the non-tugs (but honest workboats all). "Eileen C." showed up after completing chores with the tanker. "Eileen C." is not strictly a tug, but I've seen it doing a capable pull to undock the Nantucket lightship. The vehicular ferry "Knotts Landing" attended as usual, but under new ownership



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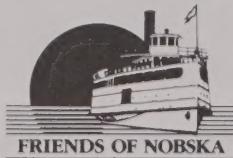


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this year she didn't challenge any tugs to a push. An old parachute shaded the party on deck, held up by what my son neatly described as an "expensive tent pole", the extended cherry picker of a telephone company line service truck parked on deck.

I toured the new pilot boat, "Northern Light". Made in England by Halmatic of fiberglass (or "glass fibre" as they call it) and about 60 feet long, this is a slim arrow of a business machine. A row of airliner seats (without seat belts) lined each side of the cabin. A watertight door led to the engine compartment with its two big Cat 3048 diesels; and beyond, another door opened into a tight berthing area. A set of steps at the stern in case a pilot went overboard were backed up by a long pole with a loop to grab him and a davit to hoist him out of the water if he couldn't climb the steps.

We were busy watching the ever popular line tossing contest when word arrived that we had to return across the harbor. We were sorry to leave but another ride on "Jason" and chance for more talk with the professionals made it easier to depart a happy, enthusiastic gathering. Attendance of people and boats hadn't been bad for our depressed Massachusetts economy and in a hurricane's wake, and the general spirit evidenced this year was even better than last year. It bodes well for Muster #8.

Hugh Ware, Manchester, MA.

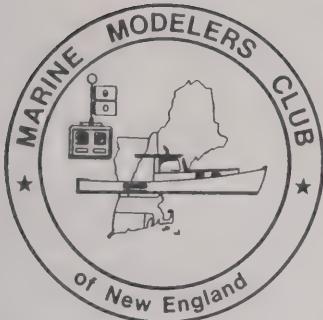
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No one was very sure what this day would bring as only one member had taken part before in the Boston Tugboat Muster. Well, it was an overwhelming success for our club. Crowds, fun, and money for the club, frantic activity from start to finish.

Several members arrived at the World Trade Center about 8 a.m. and began to set up the portable pool structure which they had spent weeks preparing. The 10'x24' rectangular pool was in place by 9:30 and filling began. A small crowd gathered during the "incoming tide" watching the docks and buildings being set up ashore. By noon people were lining up to pay \$1 for three minutes use of the radio



transmitters running the 5 teeny (12") tugs. Soon it took several members to keep things running.

The measure of the success of this effort was in the smiles of the crowd and in the \$366 taken in from transmitter rentals, even with only two of the tugs still operational by mid-afternoon, despite an

abundant supply of batteries brought with forethought. At 3 p.m. the ebb tide set in and the busy, busy day was over. Next year, a bigger pool, more tugs, lots more members to help out.

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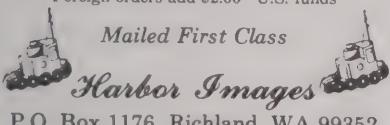
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A good cruising yarn ought to begin with a good boat, so let's start by introducing you to *Lesser Blue*. She is an Eastport Pinky, built on Surette's Island, Nova Scotia, by David Westergard, and launched in 1978. Her lines were taken off a half-model carved by a builder on Grand Manan, New Brunswick.

Her construction is robust, in the traditional manner in which wooden boats used to be built. She has proper Hackmatack hanging and lodging knees wherever needed, a stout mast that began life as a tree (not four planks and a pot of glue), sturdy and resilient pine decks, hearty bilge stringers, and all like that.

Her finish was, and remains, workboat style. Decks oiled with a mixture of pine tar, linseed oil, and turps, oiled spars, plain low-gloss paint, and not a square inch of varnished wood in sight. One of her three hatch covers is covered with a piece of copper sheathing, because there happened to be a piece the right size hanging around the shop. Other scrounged bits of hardware are in evidence.

She's not a yacht; she's a workboat. It just happens that her work is treating her people to a hell of a good time when they're on the water, while not encumbering them with endless maintenance when they're not. She is my favorite kind of pleasure boat—the kind on which you don't feel

mortally embarrassed if you slop a bit of coffee or hot chili on deck.

Lesser Blue [as in the Lesser Blue Heron] also happens to be a breathtakingly beautiful boat. A dramatic sheerline, rakish stern, and cocky stem profile produce a visual effect that works it's magic on traditional boat lovers as well as folks who haven't got a clue. Her owner remembers participating in a local low-key sailboat race, and overhearing several comments along the lines of: "No, no...don't bother with those boats—get pictures of the *old* one!"

The original Eastport pinkies—sometimes called "carry-away boats" (their primary role in the fishery was carrying sardines from the weirs to the canning factories)—were an adaptation of the larger Pinky Schooners. They ranged in size from 28 ft. to as much as 40 ft. on deck. *Lesser Blue* is 32' 9" on deck.

In the scaling down process, they lost the high swept-back bulwarks, or 'tail feathers', and tombstone transom that gave the schooners their unmistakable and unique appearance. Also lost was the schooner rig, which was unnecessarily complex and expensive for the smaller carry-away boat.

These were sloop rigged, with a huge gaff mainsail that looks frightening to modern eyes—not entirely without justification, as you'll see further on—and a good sized jib set on a stout bowsprit. It was the typical

A Grand Thrash... And Lessons Learned

By Ernie Cassidy
Photos by Roy Mandel

rig you'd find on lobster smacks, Friendship sloops, or other small coastal fishermen of the period.

Lesser Blue deviates from her ancestors in that she wears those schooner-style tail feathers. This departure from historical accuracy might offend some, but the effect is so stunning that it is painful to imagine anyone so hard-hearted that they could not be enchanted by the looks of this boat. Besides, she was not constructed as a museum display, and historical accuracy was never the builder's objective. The goal was a sound, proven design, fit to go to sea in. I think Chapelle would have approved.

She also has a twin headsail rig, which would have been the exception rather than the rule in the original boats. Apart from these modifications, she is a remarkably accurate reproduction—vastly better than the grotesqueries usually cobbled together for your typical Hollywood 'period epic'.

Her minimal, and rather spartan, cruising accommodations are certainly in keeping with the workboat theme. Lots of dark stained wood, lockers and storage areas accessed by turning a toggle-latch or simply hauling up a plank using a fingerhole.

No curtains, no velour upholstery, no polished brass gewgaws, little standing head room, and rather less than adequate natural light for true live-aboard practicality (though adequate for day sailing and week-



Lesser Blue then and now...on the ways at Surette's Island, in 1978, and in her new cradle in Annapolis Royal.

ending). There are many clever and practical touches. Nothing to send Ferenc Maté running for his camera, you understand, but I liked it just fine.

Lesser Blue's owner is as appropriately unconventional as his boat. Roy Mandel makes his living as a painter—not houses, fine art. Though not one of the superstars of this rarefied profession, he nevertheless earns a relatively normal middle-class income from his still-life paintings, done in what I suppose is called the "classical realist style."

Married to another painter and commercial illustrator, Roy and his wife Maggie manage to produce, albeit sometimes sporadically, an income that supports an old Victorian house (presently being renovated by Maggie), used vehicles, a bit of travel, and, of late, an Eastport pinky.

Roy takes no end of glee in pointing out that after twenty-plus years as a 'struggling artist', he finally owns the keys to a Volvo. [*Lesser Blue*'s auxiliary is a Volvo diesel.]

He comes by his interest in traditional wooden boats honestly, having spent a couple of Summer seasons sailing in a friend's Concordia Sloop Boat, in Massachusetts Bay, more years ago than he likes to remember.

His involvement with *Lesser Blue* goes back many years too. A friend of her builder, Roy still has photos he took of the boat as she went together in 1977-78. It was a fluke of fate—or his true destiny, as Roy prefers to put it—that put her into his hands in 1991. After moving back to Nova Scotia, from Quebec, he rescued her from an owner who was allowing *Lesser Blue* to go to wreck and ruin, out of bitterness and disappointment over a failed dream of cruises to far off places.

When he rediscovered her, in the harbour at Yarmouth, N.S., she was being used as a floating storage shed for an incredible array of junk, and as a fender between scallop driggers and a steel wharf. That she survived several years of this abuse, and two sinkings, in repairable and restorable condition is a great tribute to her builder.

After nearly a month of clean-up and basic repairs by Roy, *Lesser Blue* was sailed and motored to her new home, in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia (approximately 80 miles E. So.E. of Eastport, Maine). A singularly apt port for a 19th century fishing boat, Annapolis Royal was the site of the first European attempt at a permanent settlement in Nova Scotia—in fact, the first in North America. (Please...no nasty letters about Vikings or Irish monks.)

Here, she was turned over to a local boatbuilder for additional repairs, including some new planks, a new main boom, a few stanchions, and the restoration of those Pinky bulwarks that had been ground off by the scallop driggers.

Miraculously, the Volvo engine needed little more than cleaning of fuel lines and new filters, and the sails were still in good condition.

My first cruise on *Lesser Blue* began in Annapolis Royal, on a beautiful, unseasonably warm late-October morning. With scarcely a breath of wind in evidence, Roy put up the whole rig.

The first leg of the trip was a couple of miles down the Annapolis River to Digby

Basin. Once there, if conditions were suitable, we would slip through Digby Gut and have a look "outside"—ie, into the Bay of Fundy. The skipper was skeptical of our ability to make any real progress under sail alone, but out of deference to me and the general peace and tranquility prevailing, he gamely gave it a try.

Lesser Blue's mainsail is an impressive beast. It is set loose-footed to a 28 ft. long boom, and 450 sq. ft. of dacron rise majestically aloft when you put a big strain on the main and peak halyards. It was no end of comfort, to me, to see that she had four full rows of reef points, with nettles all strung and drumming a cheerful tattoo against the sail in the capricious morning zephyrs.

By comparison, her two headsails looked like decoration...and I suppose they were in the existing wind conditions. For all that, as soon as we slipped the mooring cable she began making way downriver, overhauling the ebb tide with enough speed to respond to the tiller.

Phillip Bolger has written that a thousand cubic feet of air weighs about 80 pounds (give or take some, depending on the ambient temperature), and that it doesn't take a large sail to affect that much air. After watching how *Lesser Blue*'s 7.66 tons ghosted away from her mooring, in a breeze that left no ripples on the water and smoke rising almost vertically in the air, it's easy to believe him. Of course, we had a *large* sail.

The local folks, accustomed to living with scallop driggers and lobster boats, appear to be quite taken with this newest vessel in their midst. It was interesting to see how many riverside dwellers would stop whatever they were doing to watch her go by.

Half-an-hour of "all ahead procession-
al" was as much as Roy could stand, so he fired up the Volvo, and we motor-sailed downriver at considerably greater speed. As can sometimes happen when you insult the wind this way, by the time we left the mouth of the river and entered Digby Basin, it was breezing right up. With full sail set, *Lesser Blue* got down to business. Her lee bulwark was



In Yarmouth, still looking bedraggled after lots of cleaning up.

well awash and my attention was fully concentrated on my duties as helmsman.

Is it this that distinguishes the true sailing fanatic from other people who simply enjoy boats and boating: that even though we know it slows the boat down, strains the hell out of her gear, and puts us right out there on the edge of minor disaster, we do it all the same because it is so deliciously exhilarating to be creaming along perched on what seems—and may, in fact, be—the brink of capsiz?

While *Lesser Blue* flashed her brick-red undies at the shore, the two of us sprawled flat on deck, grinning like fools. (Like the originals, she has no seats, nor even a cockpit in the conventional sense, just a small, deep steering well in an expanse of deck.)

Even with a six foot long tiller, the deep rudder and considerable weather helm generated by that big mainsail made steering her a job of work. I suspected there would be protesting muscles the following day. Little did I realize how much more there was to come.

Digby Basin is a medium-sized bay, fully protected from the Bay of Fundy, and entered or left by a narrow slot of water known as the Gut. It is more or less triangular in shape, roughly 4 miles across the base, and 6 miles up the hypotenuse. It is a very pretty and picturesque bay, and the lit-



Ready to float off with the next tide. That's Maggie admiring the restored bulwarks and fresh paint.

tle town of Digby has a rich history that belies its unpretentious size.

The Basin is quite shallow, particularly at low tide, and would be ideally suited for sharpie yachts and boats of the *Dovekie* or *Elver* variety. Nevertheless, there is the usual, if small, complement of singularly inappropriate fin-keeled cruiser/racers, and an active yacht club. That so few New England cruising boats visit this port is a constant mystery to me. It's as safe and pretty a harbour as you'll find anywhere.

The surrounding land is quite high, for this part of Nova Scotia, so the winds sweeping through the Basin are never quite free of the influence of those landforms. Today the wind was fair for roaring out on the last of the ebb tide flowing through the Gut. At its peak, this current can run at 5.5 to 6 knots.

Given the weight of wind in the Basin, Roy decided to reef before we poked our nose into the Bay of Fundy. To my surprise, he tied in the third reef, which made a pretty dramatic reduction in both the area and height of the sail. She certainly looked well snugged down and ready to face a breeze to me.

Face a breeze is exactly what she had to do. After squirting out through the slot, we headed off to Nor'westward on a broad reach, to avoid a nasty tide rip just beyond and below the mouth of the Gut. By the time we were outside the rip and headed back up to windward, on a course to parallel the land, it was clear that we had underestimated the strength of the wind and the sea that it was pushing up.

The new sea was running at 4.5 to 5 feet, but there was a bigger cross-swell coming in underneath. Already pressed to the limit by her sails, *Lesser Blue* would occasionally find herself perched on top of an impressive hummock of water, only to be unceremoniously tipped off it by a surface wave and sent careening into the trough. Her lee side-deck would drive under and all the dunnage not nailed or strapped down in the cabin would go galley-West.

The first couple of times this happened were pretty scary for me, though the skipper seemed quite unconcerned. The skipper was, perhaps, too busy to seem concerned; he was up forward dowsing the madly thrashing headsails and getting a right proper salt-water shower. Once she'd done this vault into the trough five or six times, I relaxed a bit, trusting *Lesser Blue* to look after herself—and us—in the seaway while I stayed focused on the business of steering and keeping that mainsail from causing an embarrassment.

It was one of these tightrope deals; much sawing at the tiller, luffing up to ease her in the big puffs, then bearing off again before she lost too much way, chocking your body off against whatever handy projections gave purchase to foot, shoulder, knee, or elbow.

I was rapidly acquiring immense respect for the men who regularly faced similar conditions in the normal course of earning their livelihood, perhaps in January. After several horse-bucket sized dousings of very cold water, the general jostling about, and the constant heaving and hawing at the tiller, it was clear to me that—transported back in time—I would not have been much of a success as a 19th century fisher-

man.

This is not to say that it wasn't great fun and exciting as all get out. But, I knew that we could turn around and run for home as soon as we'd had our fill of it. We could see Digby Gut right over there, and dry clothes, comfort, and safety were only tens of minutes away. Five hours of this would not have been great fun; ten hours would have been torture.

Even with the headsails off, it was clear that further progress to windward would remain a hard, wet, and needlessly risky business for pretend sailors with regular desk (or easel) jobs. Tying in that fourth reef looked harder and riskier still. So we prudently eased her around for a spectacular run back to the Basin.

With the wind well aft of her quarter, things settled right down. Steering became a less tense and athletic affair. *Lesser Blue*'s motion remained lively, but not the least bit scary. There was time to take in the view, including the impressive sea that was continuing to build. Our new course put us through the edge of that rip we took such pains to avoid on the way out, but *Lesser Blue* romped through that as if she'd been bred for nothing else—which, to a degree, she was. It was a bit of a letdown when we finally made the turn back into Digby Gut.

Once in the channel, and sheltered from the full force of the wind, we shook out the reef, upped headsails, and ran for home. At one point, we made a pretty spectacle when we hit equilibrium in the Gut: all sails standing, wind astern, a big bone in 'er nose, we watched *Lesser Blue* maintain station on a building ashore for about ten minutes. She was surely making 4.5 knots through the water, but absolutely no progress over the ground against the last of the ebb tide. The skipper, liking "all ahead stationary" even less than "all ahead procsional," briefly pressed the Volvo into service.

By the time we'd covered the length of the Basin, we had a dying wind but a fair stream and on those we sailed quietly back upriver. We watched a full harvest Moon rise almost dead ahead, lighting up the night enough to be able to pick up lobster pot floats three boat-lengths ahead. Later still, the wind picked up enough to ripple the water a bit and tug *Lesser Blue* along by her tiny staysail, while I steered and Roy put the big main to bed.

To meet a deadline imposed by the needs of folks left ashore, rather than any imperative we felt ourselves, we covered the last mile with the Volvo ticking over a few turns above idle speed. At this speed, and with the hatches all secured, the sound of motor was pleasant rather than intrusive, and you had to remind yourself that Katherine Hepburne would not be popping out one of the hatches with a mug of hot coffee.

We savored what had been an excellent day. A glorious day. A day to remember forever, and especially on cold Winter evenings by a woodstove, perhaps with a jar of rum.

So what's wrong with this picture?

I am getting a small sloop of my own ready to sail these same waters next year, and looking back on our sail with a critical eye, the following day, other awarenesses and impressions surfaced. It had been a

great day, but it had also been the kind of day that might have turned into tragedy, and seen both of us labeled as silly, irresponsible fools, rather than the jaunty adventurers we prefer to think ourselves.

Primarily, I found myself thinking about what would have happened if one or the other of us had gone overboard out in the Bay of Fundy—an easy thing to imagine given the angle of heel and lively motion of the boat.

Because we had not anticipated the strength of wind and sea, we had not donned any personal flotation devices, nor had we put on foul weather gear. Once out in the thick of it, there was little enough time to do that, but the truth is neither of us even *thought* of it. Nor did we think of rigging rudimentary safety harnesses, or simply streaming a warp astern to provide hope and a hand-hold for an involuntary swimmer.

PFD's do more than help you stay afloat; they also help to keep you warm both in the water or on the boat. Rain gear conserves heat too. On deck, we were in no real danger of hypothermia, though if it had been five degrees cooler we might well have been. But for someone immersed in the waters off Southwest Nova Scotia, hypothermia is a relentless killer at any time of the year, and most people would be in serious trouble within twenty to thirty minutes after falling in.

PFD's are usually bright orange and/or yellow in color. In those seas, it would have been hard enough to spot a bright orange shape bobbing sporadically into view on a wave crest a couple of hundred feet away. Dressed as we both were, it would have been nearly impossible to see either of us in all that turmoil at such a distance, let alone a greater one.

More analysis produced more alarming insights. There was a radio on board, but the mike was not attached and I had no idea where it was. In the event of the skipper going over the side, I might have had no way to summon help...thereby dramatically decreasing the odds of recovering him. Nor, for that matter, did I know how to start the Volvo. Perhaps it was as simple as turning the key; perhaps not. I didn't know.

Could I—unassisted—have gotten the mainsail down and secured, fired up the engine, turned around and started a search, and still have had any chance of finding Roy? Could he have done as much for me? I don't know, and realizing that bothers me a lot.

None of this was of any concern while we were in the Basin, and we never gave it a thought. In the Bay of Fundy, even right along shore, these things could have mattered a lot. The odds of swimming three-quarters of a mile to shore, in water that cold and seas that rough, are too slim to bear calculating, even if you were wearing a PFD.

Pete Culler once said that experience starts when you begin. He was talking about experience in the workshop, but it is as true out on the water. We gained a lot of experience on this trip, at a bargain price: no one was hurt or drowned or even seriously discomfited, and nothing carried away and hurt the boat.

This is due as much—likely more—to the fact that we were on great boat as any-

thing we could personally claim credit for. Our traditional fishing boat was more capable than we were, and may ever be. And luck was on our side; no one made that unfortunate slip that puts you into the drink or results in some other crisis.

When my *Blue Bird* goes into the water, I and my future passengers are going to benefit from this experience. For one thing, she won't be going out into the Bay of Fundy until I am satisfied that I fully understand her capabilities and limitations in more protected waters.

If or—more honestly—when she does venture out there, she will have a man overboard kit (including a flag on a floating staff and a strobe light) ready to deploy at a moment's notice. My crew will be shown where the radio is and how to use it, as well as how to get the sails down and the motor running.

I swear we'll have a man overboard drill or two. I dislike the image of my boat sailing off with a nearly helpless crew, leaving me to drown or die of exposure in the chilly waters off our coast. I dislike the thought of subjecting one of my passengers to such an unseemly end even more.

None of this is meant as a criticism of Roy. With some justification, he made assumptions about my knowledge and ability in and around boats. It wasn't certain that we would head out into the Bay until we finally did it, and once out there we both got too caught up in the excitement, not to mention the busyness, of it all to think about these things—though it is easy to say, with hindsight, that we should have.

Our failure to think it through beforehand, and make appropriate preparations, is as much my fault as his, and I accept as much responsibility for any lapses in planning or judgment.

Oddly enough, I do many of these things when I take people out sailing in my 12 ft. skiff, in a warm inland lake. PFDs at



Lesser Blue on her mooring in Annapolis Royal.

the ready. Basic training in how to at least stop the boat if the skipper goes overboard. More advanced boat handling, if the new crew exhibits any interest. The risks and hazards, while certainly of a lower order of magnitude, are nevertheless immediately and inescapably obvious in a small boat; so you plan for them accordingly.

I see, now, that some of our lack of preparation had its origin in the false sense of security you get on a boat the size of *Lesser Blue*. In the Basin, she felt as solid and secure as the *Princess of Acadia* [the ferry to St. John, N.B.] even while doing all

those rail-down acrobatics. Out in the Bay of Fundy, she suddenly felt like a pretty small boat.

Hopefully, we'll both be better skippers for having reflected on this. If it makes you reflect and become a better skipper too, well that's one of the things this journal is all about...sharing these experiences so that we all become better, safer, smarter boaters.

Ernie Cassidy works with computers and messes about in small boats on the French Shore of the Bay of Fundy.

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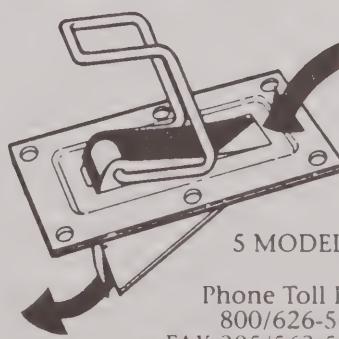
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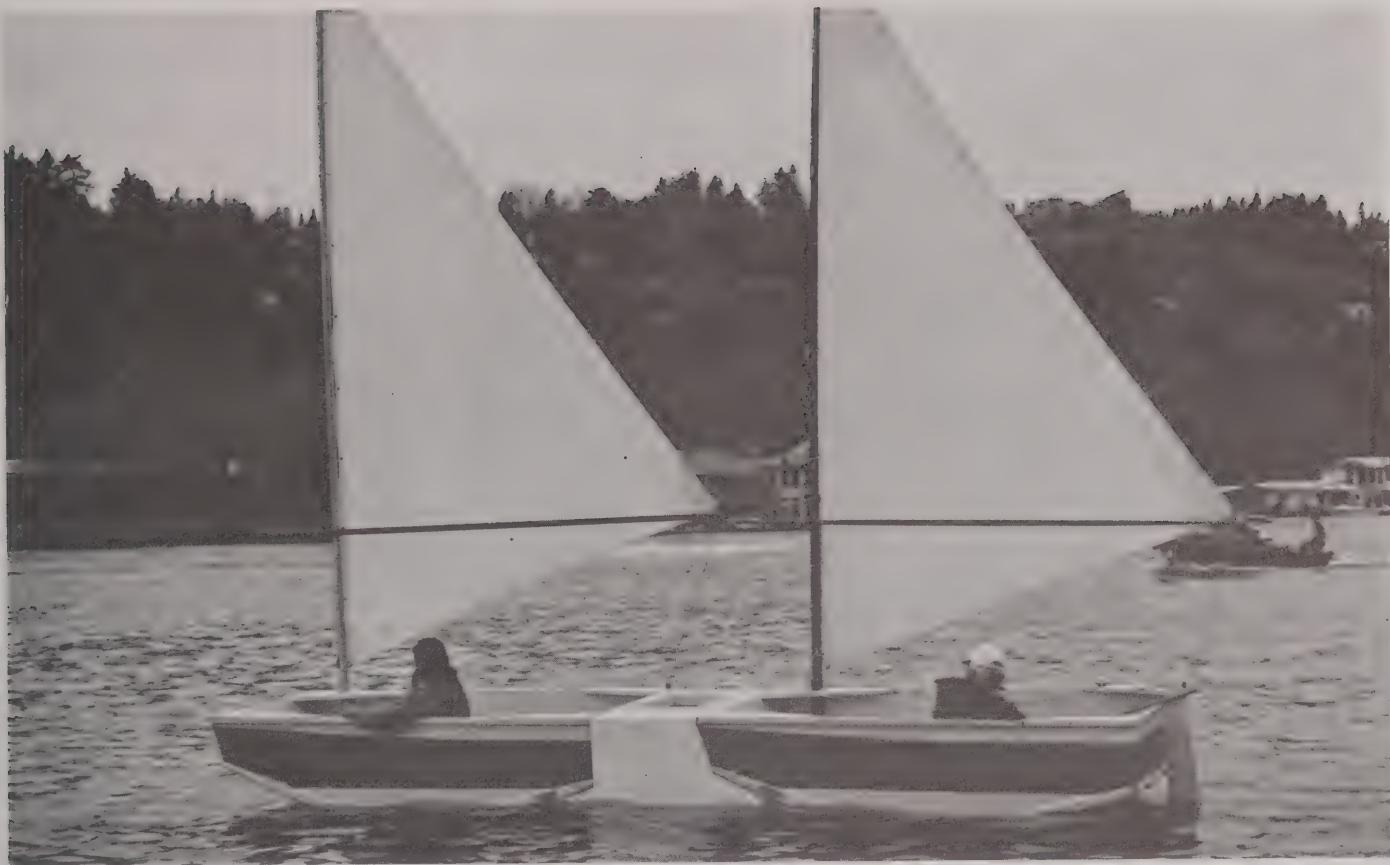


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"Double Brick" - Double Weird

"I'll make the metal pieces," Bob Young said, looking over the plans. It was my turn to be skeptical. When I told Bob I would have a "Double Brick" done by our planned messabout, coming up in less than two weeks, I could sense his disbelief that I would finish in time. Little did he know that the wood part was easy, it was the four 6"x4-1/2" triangles of 1/8" stainless steel with 33 drilled holes each that would take the real time and effort. And the brackets were an essential part of "Double Brick".

The messabout idea had been simmering for some time; ever since Joe Tribulato in San Diego had taken the idea from my newsletter and run with it. He found the idea of a low impact, non-commercial boating meet appealing and, in short order, gave the idea the name "messabout", contacted a group of like-minded boating enthusiasts and put on the first meet. Since then, messabouts have sprung up all over the country. Because of Joe's efforts they seem to happen at least twice a month in southern California. At messabouts, back yard boat builders, boat dreamers, and anyone else interested in low impact boating, can get together to show off their creations, go sailing, compare ideas, dreams, and notes, and enjoy each other's company.

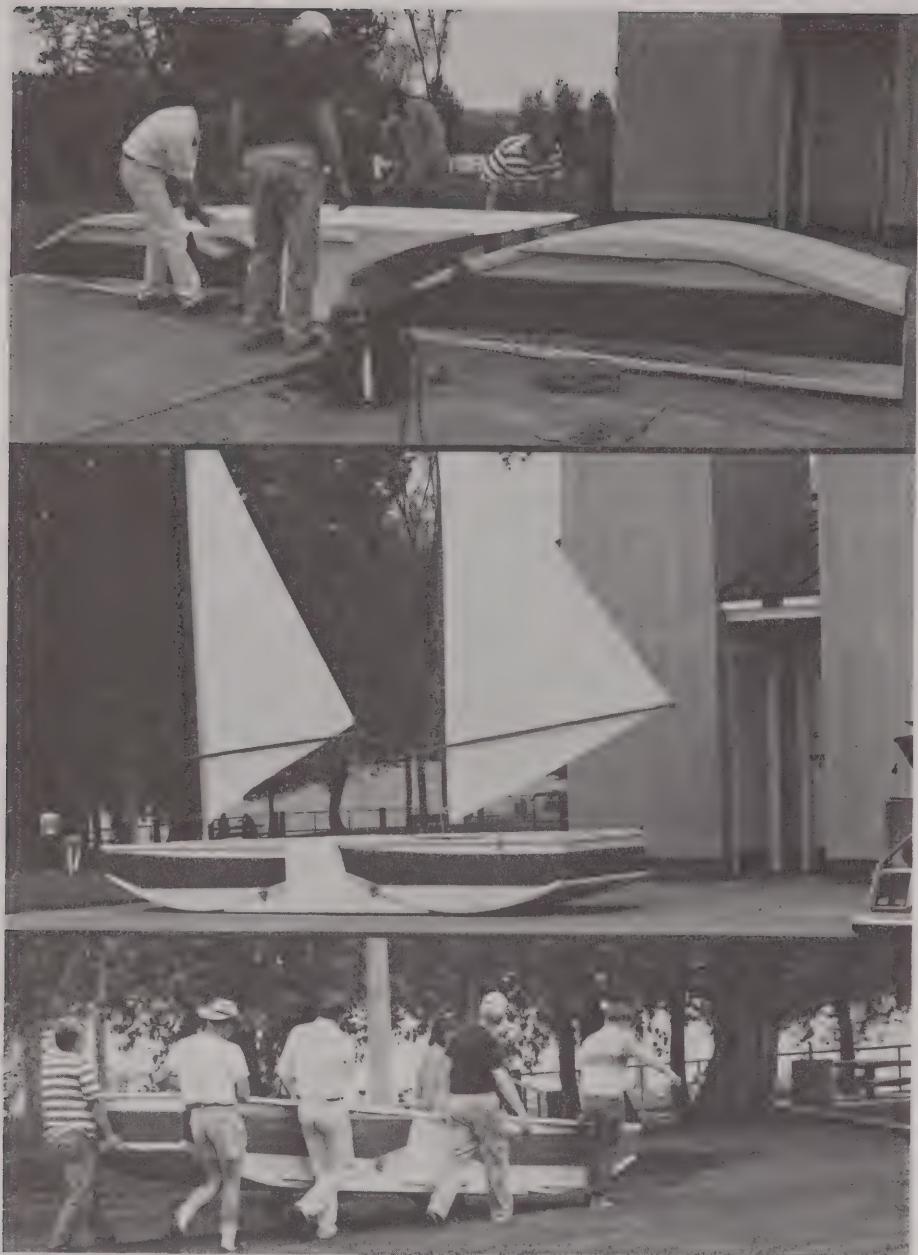
After encouraging others to go for it, I kept hoping someone would get the idea and put on a messabout here in Portland (OR) or Vancouver (WA) so I could attend with little effort on my part. But, after a year of waiting had seen nothing happen, Bob and I decided that the only way we were going to have our messabout would be to put it on ourselves. We had been working for some time on developing a boat builders' co-op and small boat facility, and decided that if we were going to do this kind of real work we might as well take the time to get out on the water with friends and enjoy ourselves. So we set a date, found a place on the water, contacted local boaters and the media, and were ready for Portland's own messabout.

At this time my boat inventory consisted of two "Bricks" (the appropriately named Bolger-designed 4'x8' sailing dinghy with about as much shape as a concrete mixing trough) laying about as the aftermath of an aborted attempt at mass production boat building. It turned out that commercial production of boats for persons who use wheelchairs for mobility was not the most lucrative career move. Besides, building for sale took the fun out of the building, which I enjoy too much to want to make it into work. So I had the two test "Bricks" on hand, occasionally tak-

ing one out when I felt the need to confound the local boating gurus with the fact that a box can make a great boat.

In the back of my mind was a boat called "Double Brick". It was a design by Phil Bolger for a crab fisherman in Alaska. "Double Brick" was to be an easy-to-store, cheap-to-build and inexpensive to operate, crab boat for the bays of Alaska. With its quick and easy construction and its ability to carry over a ton of crab, "Double Brick" seemed to fit the bill. When, for one reason or another (perhaps an attack of common sense), the Alaskan boat never got built, and with the impending messabout as motivation, I decided that since I already had two "Bricks", I might as well build the prototype "Double Brick". Besides, I had almost a month to get this done before the messabout.

I sell boat plans for a living, and because of this I had mixed feelings about "Double Brick". If it worked, the boat would be functional and unusual to the extreme. In fact, it could be perceived as bizarre. If it didn't work, there would be enough embarrassment to go around. My business is built on functional, easy-to-build boats, but "Double Brick" might be perceived as going a little too far; an effort to tweak the nose of the boating establishment, perhaps even an ex-



"Double Brick" is assembled and carried to the water with a little bit of help from Bernie's friends.

ercise in poor judgement. If this was the impression "Double Brick" created, then who would want to buy boat plans from this "far side"? I would go broke while bearing the brunt of the boating establishment's ridicule. These ruminations gave me more than a few misgivings about building "Double Brick". At this point, I did what I usually do; I decided, what the hell, quit thinking about it and just do it!

As this was at tax season, cheap became a primary building criterium. I usually don't advocate using non-marine plywood or other material in boats, as the cost savings don't seem to outweigh the deleterious effect on building enjoyment, ability to apply a decent finish, and general overall negative impact on longevity and pride of ownership.

That having been said, I

looked into my wallet and then went out to buy the cheapest materials I could find. I found 8', 1"x2" pine strips for \$.42 apiece. With careful selection I found a few that weren't twisted completely into loops and that would hold their own weight when held up by one end. I bought ACX plywood for \$9 a sheet. It had voids in the core, boat patches on the good side, a patch-work of knotholes on the back side, And dinged corners. In my home building days we had called this stuff "Plug and Touch", just one step better than "Blows" and "Sanded Shop". In another word, "junk". Building with marine-grade wood seems to have gotten me out of touch with how bad readily available building material has become. I swallowed my pride and picked out two sheets that I couldn't see through.

My last stop was for a few pounds of plastic resin glue. After trying everything else, this is still my favorite for holding small boats together. I already had silicon bronze ring shank nails and epoxy left over from other projects. In all I spent about \$30 to build the "Brick Connector".

Back home I sorted out the building material on the back porch, got out my tools and Bolger's plans, and started building. First I put together the two bulkheads with nailing frames. Being rectangular with only one bevel between them, they were done almost as quickly as I could think about doing them. I laid out and cut the sides from the plywood panels and added the chine and sheer logs. Boy, this was a piece of cake. With a little help from a friend and a large hammer, I fit the bulkheads into place and the "Brick Connector" started to look like, well, what it was supposed to look like. Sort of an upside-down, post shaker, avante gard, art deco modern table. After a little detail work, including adding a bottom and a deck, it was time to call Bob to ask about the metal pieces. We still had almost two weeks a before the messabout.

Bob couldn't help grumbling a little bit about the cost of stainless steel and the fact that no one seemed to know an easy way to cut it. The next time I talked to him he told me he had started cutting it by hand with a hack saw, after destroying several metal cutting jigsaw blades. I left him alone and put a leisurely coat of primer on the "Brick Connector". It was a tense race against time while avoiding Bob as he hack sawed the metal pieces. I felt, quite justifiably, that after all it was his job and I should not steal his thunder. It had nothing to do with the fact that I hate cutting and shaping stainless. Honest!

Three days before the messabout Bob re-emerged with the metal pieces in hand, cut, shaped and drilled. I tried to avoid his story about how long and hard a job it had been to work the stainless with a hack saw and a drill, by nodding my head and making sympathetic sounds. All we had left to do was to put the beast together.

This should have been quick and easy. Of course it was long and hard. The "Brick Connector" holds the "Bricks" in alignment with an ingenious system of blocks. These engage the exterior framing of the "Bricks" to hold everything in line. A single long metal rod holds each "Brick" in place on the "Brick Connector". The problem was that the placement of the blocks and the rods was interdependent and we couldn't fit everything together and then measure where the blocks should go. After much shoving, redoing, fancy

language and slapstick construction (after all, we were facing a deadline), we seemed to have gotten it all to fit together.

It was then that we discovered a design flaw. The 4', 5/16" diameter metal rod that goes through the metal brackets on the "Bricks" and the "Brick Connector" to hold everything together would droop down inside the "Connector" when we tried to push it through from one side to the other. This made it impossible to align it with the opposite hole 4' away. Drat! The fix would turn out to be easy, but the messabout was the next day now and we were running out of time. We decided to take the "Double Brick" to the messabout in three pieces and see if we could finish assembling it there. At this point neither Bob nor I thought that it would be useable at the messabout, but neither of us wanted to admit this misgiving to the other.

The next day at the messabout, we got the needed help to finish "Double Brick". Doug Miller, a local contractor, showed up with every tool known to man, and in no time he solved the problem of getting the rod from one side to the other, tying everything together. While figuring out his quick fix, Doug, being a house builder, came up with a name for the "Brick Connector". He reasoned that if it holds "Bricks" together it must be "Grout". With the three parts of "Double Brick" finally mated, it was time for launching and a test sail.

Winds were light, only about five knots. Bob and Doug went out for the first sail and in the light air were able to sail upstream and into the wind. It worked! The crew, sitting in the forward "Brick", seemed so far away that some sort of communication device seemed appropriate. It seemed like it must be the world's largest 18' boat.

My turn was next and as the builder, I felt some pressure to make it look good. This was the first time I had ever sailed with a schooner rig and it was a challenge. It seems that without proper sail control you can't tack easily. This was partly due to the light wind and partly because, as Bolger told me, the long mid-body could be a problem in stays. Because of the sail control possible with the schooner rig, this was not a big problem. I wonder if a Gloucesterman would be offended by my calling this creation a schooner?

The connections make salty creaking noises sailing over a chop. "Double Brick" is not the best looking boat in the world and it is certainly not traditional, but it might be one of the most imaginative and practical.

Imagine this: You are a sailing instructor teaching novices.

After explaining the basics, you take two students out in "Double Brick". As they start to get the hang of handling it, you climb in the center section (after first making sure that it is stable by itself), disconnect the two "Bricks" and let the neophytes go at it themselves. Depending on your nature, you either take a nap or yell instructions with a bullhorn. After everyone has tired of this, you reconnect the "Bricks" and head back to the dock, answering questions about sailing as you go. If you use your imagination, other scenarios are possible with the unique nature of "Double Brick".

Bernie Wolfard, Portland, OR. (Bernie Wolfard sells home building plans for a number of other Bolger designs as Common Sense Designs, P.O. Box 9429, Portland, OR 97291.



Bernie and Bob look over their dreamboat.

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Introducing "Chipmunk"

I can now announce the availability of the new "Chipmunk" models; the "Chipmunk Canoe" and (why not), the "Chipmunk Stable Shell". I've finished the prototype of this new constant camber hull and found it to be another good, fast, pretty boat. It's 17'x35", 60 pounds untrimmed, and has an E.M. White-ish sheer and stems. Of course, there's a family resemblance to my "Goodboat", the panels for both come off the same mold.

I didn't put any rails or decks on at all before trying it as a solo canoe and as a sliding seat boat with the Piantedosi Row Wing unit. I was pleased to find that it didn't really need rails or decks for strength. This is what you would get after putting together the two-part kit and rolling on some System Three Clearcoat; an ex-

tremely strong, smooth, seamless wooden boat with closely fit red cedar diagonal planking inside and out. For about \$850.

I gave the bottom very little rocker. It has vee sections near the ends and, of course, a shallow arch in the middle. I don't see how it could be improved upon within the constraints of the constant camber method of fabrication. It makes a fine all-around tandem recreational canoe.

Serious scullers may snicker at my calling a seatless version a "Stable Shell", and I suppose technically this is a misnomer, but it sure is quick and comfortable with the Row Wing. I have the idea from my reading in hydrodynamics that the "Chipmunk", with its constantly curving waterlines has a good form, maybe a better form than

most canoe or fixed seat rowboats, for powering with a sliding seat unit.

I welcome better understanding about this. What I think I've gleaned, from Pierre Gutelle and others, is that hollow waterlines fore and aft help below hull speed, but convex lines are better once you push the boat faster, ie. overpower it, which I think you are doing when you row the 'Chipmunk' at over 4.5 knots. One would routinely do this using a sliding seat.

People who would build or buy the "Chipmunk" as a tandem canoe could get a set of seats and a carrying yoke from Shaw & Tenney, or make them themselves; or I would supply all the trimmings. I've since fitted #1 with lightweight rails and small cherry decks and will soon make cherry seats, hand caned, and a yoke. I'm inclined to not put in any other thwarts since they are not needed for strength.

Is the "Chipmunk" a meaningful addition to the wide selection of canoes and kits available? Well, we'll see. There aren't many ways to build your own canoe unless you want a stripper or can get a wood/canvas canoe form. There aren't right now any other constant camber kits offered than our "Goodboat" and "Chipmunk", for those who wish to use this simple and effective modern method of boatbuilding. In fact, I don't know of any other modern ribless full-size wooden canoes on the market.

Finally, as carefully hand-made wooden boats go, including wood/canvas canoes, the "Chipmunk" will be a good buy. I'll need to get about \$1,800 for it to build and finish it myself.

Mason Smith, Adirondack Goodboat Company, Box 44, North Point Rd., Long Lake, NY 12847, (518) 624-6398.



Just a "bare hull", "Chipmunk" with no gunwales or interior structure ready to go for a row.

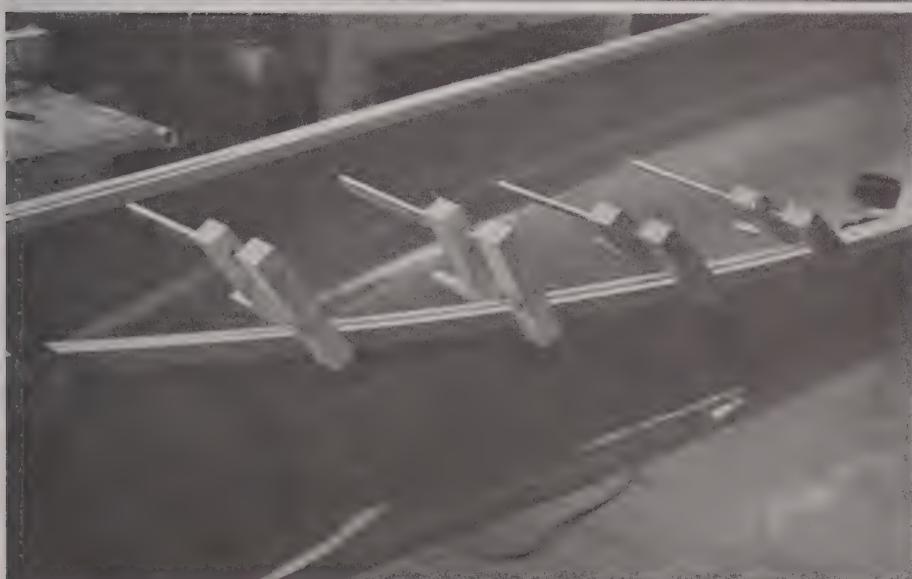
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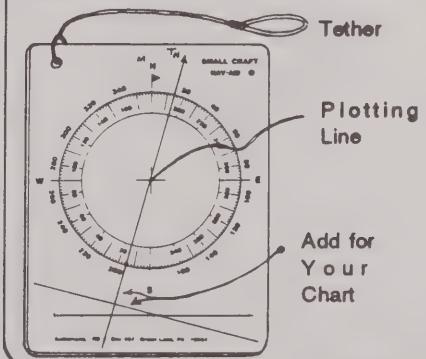
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I was delighted to receive several responses to my recent request in MESSING for readers' experiences with epoxies, sheathing, and paints. I received letters from:

Richard Randall, 74 E. Lakeshore Dr., PO Box 788, Cherokee Village, AR 72525

Bob Pedersen, 1 Nevin Terrace, Massapequa Park, NY 11762

Jerome Kligerman, 607 Two Independence Place, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Steve Elliott, 5950 Memphis St., New Orleans, LA 70124.

Let me present a potpourri of responses, arranged from the inside of a boat to the outside.

PLYWOOD AND LUMBER

Bob Pedersen wrote that "All my boats were built of ordinary exterior plywood, either lauan mahogany or southern pine B-C grade. Fir ply is lousy to sand."

SHEATHING AND EPOXIES

Richard Randall said that "Every material is a compromise, as is every boat model: Glass cloth soaks up epoxy resin readily, but is heavy, doesn't like to go around curves and corners. Zynolepolyester cloth is difficult to soak with resin, but is soft like cheesecloth and withstands much more abrasion than glass cloth."

Steve Elliott had no problems with fiberglass on three boats, but...epoxy from Glen-L "stunk and went off fast even though the medium hardener was used. The other two [boats] have used System 3. Good product with easy to mix two to one ratio and helpful people to guide you. Prompt service too."

My brother and I foolishly left a small boat overturned on the beach for a Minnesota winter. The blue-painted hull warmed in the sun, while temperatures were often low. The 1/4" fir plywood cracked through the exterior plies, on many parts of both the inside and outside of the boat, even though it was coated with epoxy. But the part of the boat that was sheathed with polypropylene cloth did NOT suffer. The epoxy's manufacturer, Chem-Tech, was quick to respond to our inquiries, and we blame ourselves for the problem, rather than the epoxy itself. Chem-Tech's helpful Jerry Schindler wrote "if the cracks occurred outside the Dynel-sheathed area, it's likely that frost wedging is implicated." Had I it to do over again I would glass the face of the plywood that would be inside the boat before attaching the plywood, then cover the whole outside when done.

Harry Peters, of Industrial Formulators of Canada, Inc. (manufacturer of Cold Cure and other epoxies), wrote me that "I prefer glass

Comments on Paints & Glues

Gregg Shadduck

cloth or Dynel over plywood.... Polypropylene is an excellent material. It has very high tensile strength, abrasion resistance and is light weight. It is also completely unbondable (nothing sticks to it) and floats in resin. I personally do not recommend it because of this. It always remains separate from the structure it is applied to." He sure has seen more than I have, must have seen some polypropylene peel off, but doesn't it stand to reason that ANY cloth is separate from the wood underneath, held only by the epoxy? That is except for Alan Vaitse's method of filling the cloth with staples on 3-4" centers.

PAINT

The definition of what is "cheap" paint might surely vary. The low end might be held, for instance, by something like the Dutch Boy flat white exterior latex on sale at a store near us for \$6/gal. This is the type of paint, if not the brand, that Phil Bolger says, with proud humility, he uses on his own, substantial, boat.

Bob Pedersen wrote that "All my boats never had bottom paint as they were trailered. Two coats at first, then 1 coat latex every couple years. I like the look of semi-gloss, neat but won't show minor imperfections."

Jerome Kligerman argues for older, oil-based technology." In 1977 I followed Pete Culler's advice and painted my new-built Rangeley (spruce planking) with oil-based house paint. Results: sensational, for all the reasons given by Culler, which see. The wood was first saturated with linseed oil cut with turpentine, as John Gardner was advising in his "National Fisherman" technical articles then (ca. 2 months drying time). Paint is still good in the can, touch-up blends beautifully, finish does not look like plastic - it looks like a handsome wood boat."

Richard Randall wrote that "IF your boat is to be out of the water most of the time, then I'd say ANY exterior paint -- over a good undercoat, of course -- would do. If the boat (any boat) is to stay in the water, then it's a wholly new ballgame... my personal opinion is that sooner or later the paint will separate unless it's BOTTOM paint."

Here's a good story: Richard Randall describes a flat-bottom powerboat he built of plywood covered with epoxy/fiberglass. Having no advice on the finish, he chose an "epoxy sealer," covered that with a topside paint, and "within 6 months all the paint from the waterline down was stripping off. I had obviously made the wrong move." His next boat, a tri, will have outriggers painter with hard (racing) bottom paint, and a main, glass, hullwaxed only with a product called "Slick Stuff." Boat will stay in the water most of the year.

Bob Pedersen has built several boats. In summary:

-- 16' kayak, 1/4" lauan ply covered with fiberglass and polyester resin (which cost more than the kayak). "Boat came out very neat but I'll never get used to working with any resins and fiberglass. Vowed never to use it again."

-- 8' MiniMax hydroplane, 1/4" lauan,

with fiberglass at seams. Painted with marine enamel. Use four years. No delamination.

-- 12' MaxiMost runabout, 30 hp. Same as above, but used oil primer under ordinary semi-gloss house paint. "Beautiful."

-- Bought 19' plywood runabout, used for 13 years, painted only with latex house paint every three years.

-- And an even better horror story: built Payson Diablo, 15' "Good boat, but it pounds on the flat bottom in the smallest waves. Painted with oil primer and RustOleum Wood Saver. Big mistake!" It is advertised for exterior use, not marine, but he chanced it since the boat was trailered: "Wrong! One 3 hour ride, store for winter, spring time paint all cracked. Tried burning it off. Ha! Tried paint remover. Haha! Nothing worked. Clogged the sandpaper, laughed at the scraper. Fixed it all with a chain saw."

-- "Now I have a 15 foot aluminum boat that is 33 yrs old and looks great with latex house paint, only 1 coat."

PAINTS OVER EPOXY

Steve Elliott used oil house paint, glossy, on three boats to be dry sailed. "This paint dried satisfactorily over the Glen-L epoxy but not the System 3 epoxy which demanded a barrier coat of Interlux epoxy primer between the epoxy and the paint. It was easy to use in cool weather. Impossible in hot weather. Expensive from any source, but the cheapest sources I found were discount mail order marine suppliers." Also used semi-gloss latex on cabin top, over Interlux epoxy primer. Similarly, "some problems with varnish drying over the epoxy coating but cleaning the epoxy first with soap and warm water helps, and I found that McCloskey's dries best." (See also the "Wooden Boat" review of Petit's All-Temp Undercoat in this role. Sorry, I can't find the issue. Who has an index?)

W. Kern Hendricks (System Three Resins) writes, in "The Epoxy Book": "Six years ago [1981] almost any paint could be successfully applied over cured epoxy resin. The paint makers then began modifying their formulas. Today many of these products will not dry when applied over epoxies. This is not the resin's fault. It didn't change in any way that could produce the observed result. Yet, these results make it appear that the epoxy is guilty."

ADVICE

"If I were to get involved in a large project again I would ask the suppliers and some of the builders who advertise in "Messing About" before I used any product blindly." -- Richard Randall

Bob Pedersen writes that "Building boats is very inexpensive if you use the ORDINARY materials at hand. I've read Payson's books and he's right on all accounts, but I still don't like to use glass and resins. This seems to be a personal thing.... I wind up with more slathered around than I use on a seam. Ugh!"

"Payson offers excellent information on painting in INSTANT BOATS. My debt is to him and the System 3 EPOXY BOOK." -- Steve Elliott.

If you haven't worked with epoxies before, get the books from the epoxy manufacturers. Each says something interesting and unique. And especially fun is System Three's \$10 trial pack, full of goodies and a small book, as well as a \$10 coupon on your first purchase. Goof around with it. System Three Resins, PO Box 70436, Seattle, WA 98107; tel. (206) 782-7976.



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1. Latex vs. Oil. I've never seen a latex paint that held up on a boat. The marine environment is harsher than the environment your house lives in. You can't expect a paint designed for siding to hold up on a deck for instance. And even when used only on topsides, I've often seen latex peeling off in big sheets by the end of the season. This may very well be due to inadequate surface preparation, of course. I imagine if there was any of the old oil left in the wood, or driven into it by use of a heat gun stripping old paint, the latex wouldn't stick. Also there is a lot of moisture in the wood in a boat and I expect that this affects the adherence of water-based paint too.

2. Gloss vs. Semi-gloss vs. Flat. This comes down to what you want your finish to look like in relation to what your boat is made of. For instance, if you've built a Bolger "Shoe Box" out of 1/4" marine fir plywood, it's almost impossible to get a really good surface preparation done. The wood is just too soft and full of curves and valleys and little cracks. So trying for a high gloss yacht finish is usually a waste of time. It can be done by using sanding sealer and many coats of primer, sanding between each coat ad nauseum. You might as well buy high quality plywood to begin with.

On the other hand, a beautifully built Whitehall demands a yacht finish. On good wood a high gloss paint job makes an enormous difference. Take a look at "Annie", the sandbagger at Mystic Seaport as an example. So what do you do with the fir "Shoe Box"? How about a "workboat" finish? Paint for workboats has three functions, as opposed to that for yachts, which has only one, to look good. Workboat paint has to protect the wood, be easy to apply and easy to maintain. It also has to be economical and look good.

Protecting the surface is the main job of all paints. If the finish

Thoughts on Boat Paint

is kept up they do the job. The traditional lead-based boat paint covered wood very well, it adhered securely, yet was flexible. Once a year a boat was scraped down to remove loose paint, and a new coat was applied. When the paint build-up got too thick, it was all scraped completely off and the process began over again. During the season a meticulous owner might touch up a bare spot here and there. Notice how easy this all is. It's work, but it's simple work. Compare this to two-part systems (Imron, etc.). Workboats didn't look like yachts, but they looked okay and the wood was protected. This workboat finish was always a sort of semi-gloss.

I think that semi-gloss is a much better choice for most boats than flat. Flat paint shows dirt and muss too well, the very roughness of its surface traps the dirt and scuff marks and it's very hard to keep the paint clean with an occasional scrubdown. On the other hand, flat paint is very easy to touch up.

3. What's Underneath the Paint? Follow the instructions on the can. If it says to use their brand of sealer and/or primer before you paint, do it. I don't think it matters much if you use a quality house paint or a good marine paint. I've used both and I've had better results with boat paint, but not that much better. Using the right system, though, makes a big difference. It's risky to mix paint systems. Usually with a plywood boat you would use a sealer on the wood, then a primer (if a dark color, black, dark green, etc.). The

same color paint in a flat can make a good primer. Finally you put on your finish coats. Remember though that a finish is only as good as the preparation allows. If there are bumps and nubbies and dust before you paint, they will show up in the finish. For the best finish, you should vacuum, tack and wipe with alcohol just before you paint.

4. About the Cost. Now if you want to pull the old skiff out from under the woodpile, hunt around the garage until you find some old ends of paint, throw them together and slap the mess onto your boat, okay. It's also okay to go to K-Mart and pick up anything that's on sale. It's your boat. But think about the work next year if you have to re-paint. Then you'll have to scrape the peeling mess off. And if you've just built the boat, think of the economics. Even the cheapest box will have cost a few hundred dollars in materials, and a quart of good paint is a small fraction of the overall cost.

5. Number of Coats. Except for varnish and perhaps gloss black, I don't think you need apply many coats of paint. The fewer the better in my view. If the boat looks good with one coat of finish paint, well and fine. As long as it's well primed, the paint should hold.

Safety. I used the old lead-based boat paints for years and I wish I hadn't. They were great paints but I now think their toxicity far outweighed their usefulness. Even non-lead paint has its hazards. It got to the point with me that I developed a sensitivity to paint fumes and had to use a respirator every time I painted. For someone building a boat in the garage, these hazards are far less menacing but are still present. Keep windows open and fans on. Read the cautions on the cans. It's your health.

Dan Marcus, Noank, CT.

(Dan Marcus spent several recent years employed on restoration work at Mystic Seaport Museum).

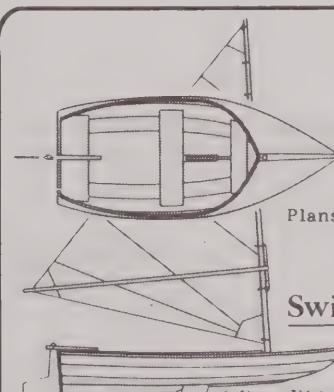
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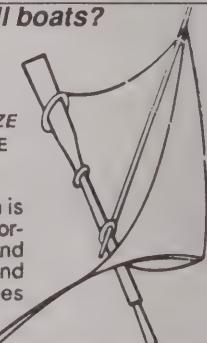
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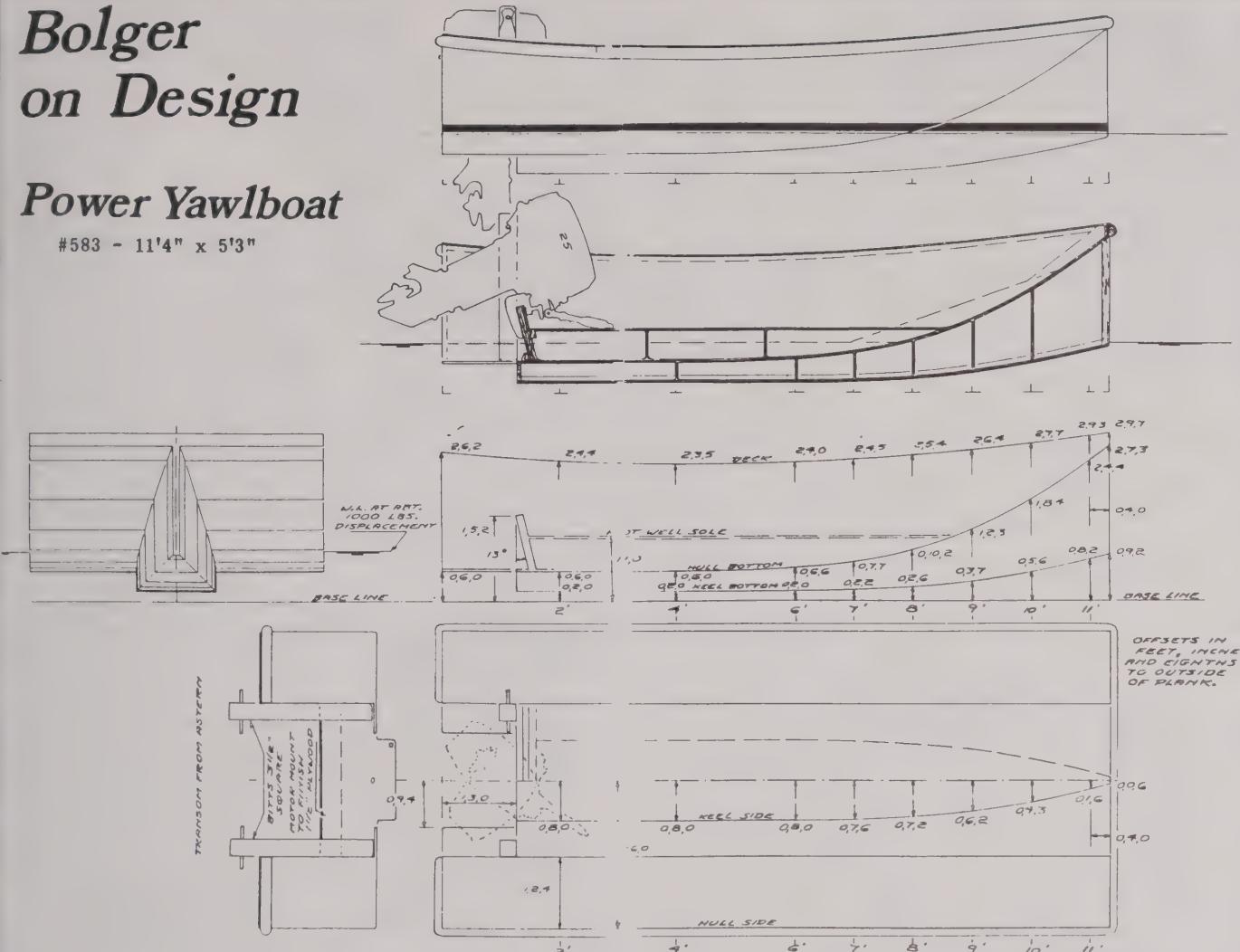
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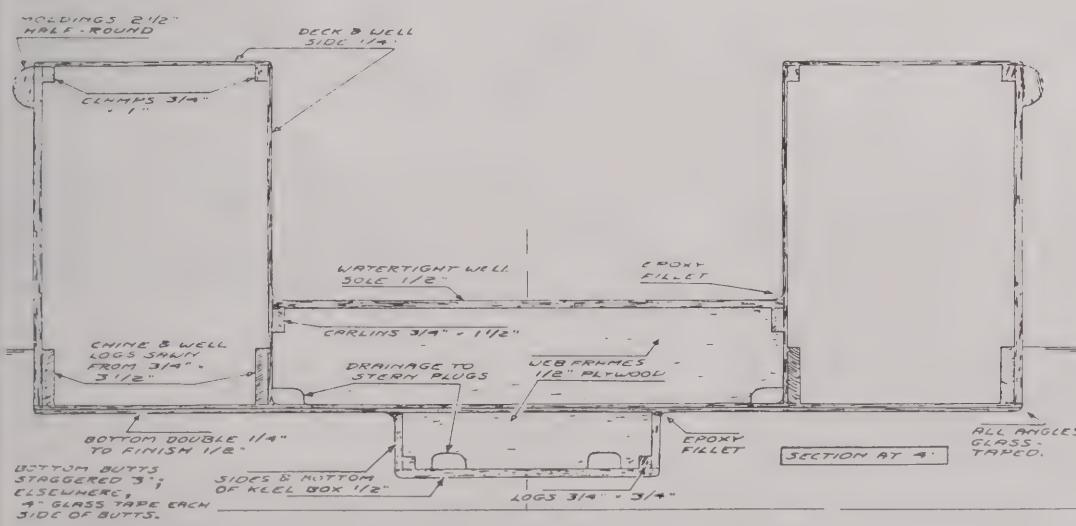
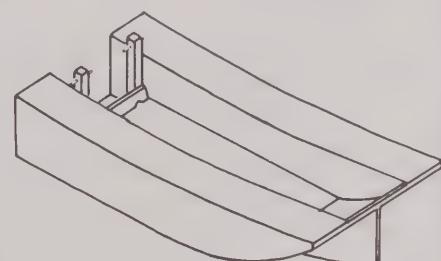
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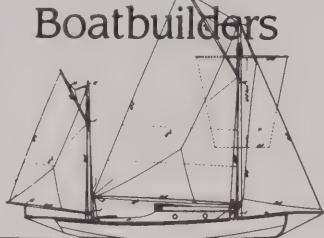
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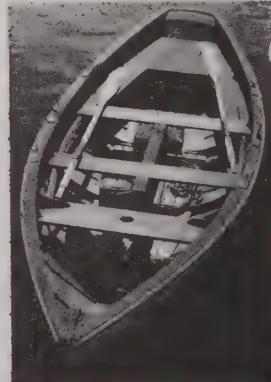
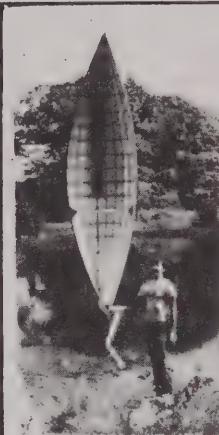
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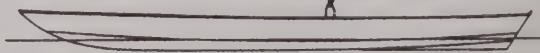
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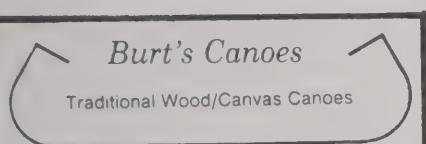


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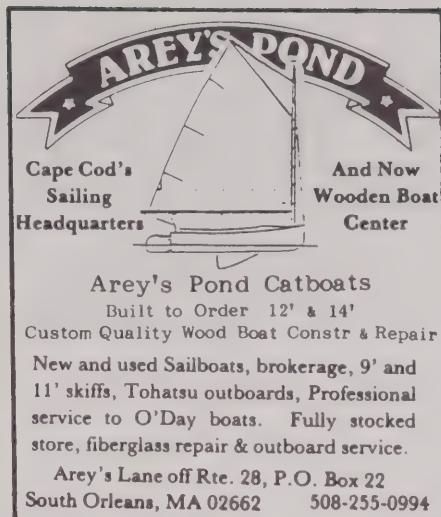
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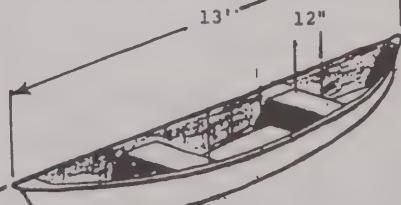
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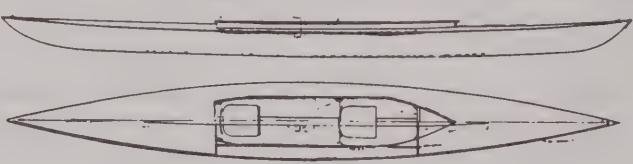


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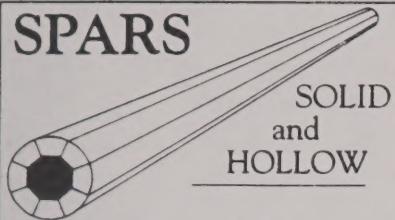
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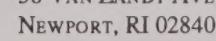
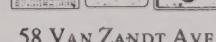
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16' DORY, sailing/rowing, double ended, blt in Norway in '82, shipped to Minnesota. Traditional sail rig, 4 oars, cover, trlr. Lk new cond, little used. I can help transport. \$2,500.

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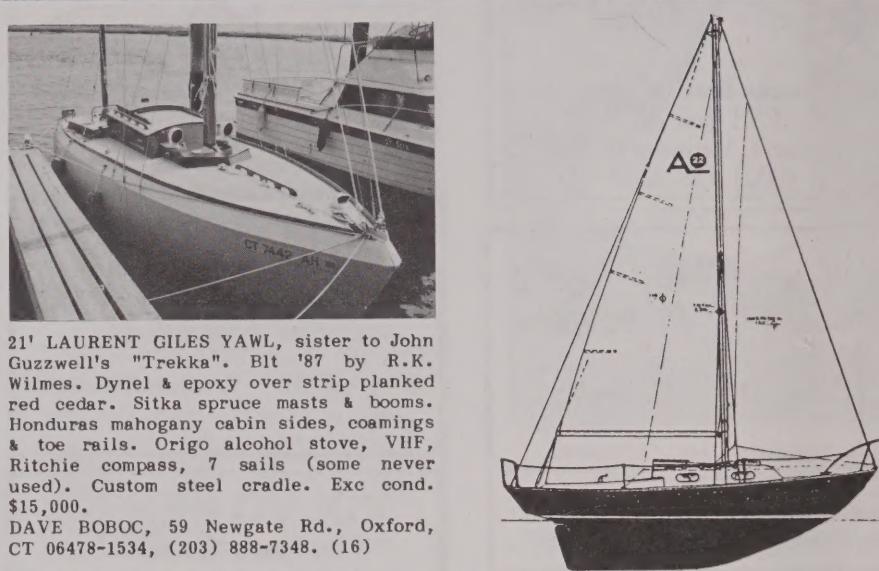
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FRED BROWNING, P.O. Box 398, Jamestown, NC 27282, (919) 454-3534. (15)



1970 ALBERG 22 FG SLOOP, LOA 22', LWL 16', Beam 7', Draft 3'1", Ballast 1,200lbs, Displacement 3,200lbs. Main, jib, 135/150% genoa, cruising spinnaker. 7.5 Merc long shaft OB. Teak trim. Compass, ground tackle, berth cushions, porta-potti, anchor light, gas tank, fenders, tandem axle trlr w/ext.

RICK PAULY, (616) 271-6087 eves, (616) 271-6000 days. (15)

USED ROWING BOATS. Seabright skiffs & Whitehalls, various conditions, \$350+. WATER SPORTS WORLD, INC., Avon-by-the-Sea, NJ, (908) 988-4992. (15)

23' COM PAC MK II SLOOP, 1985 (commissioned in 1986). Superbly crafted FG shoal draft pocket cruiser in Bristol cond. Slps 4, galley, sails w/cover, 8hp Evinrude Sailmaster w/alternator. Galv tandem axle trlr, compass, CQR anchor/rode, cockpit & winter covers, extras. Asking \$10,500, reasonable offers considered.

BOB GROESCHNER, Norwalk, CT, (203) 847-8726 (IV message). (15)

FLEET SALE. 18' Durnatec aluminum boat w/lg cuddy, tandem trlr, no motor, \$950. Suzuki Spirit 9.9hp, 20" shaft, abt 10 hrs total use, \$750 firm. Laser sailboat abt 6 yrs old, \$950 firm. Aquaterra Solo, fastest plastic sea kayak, boat only, \$750 firm. Howmar sailing dinghy compl, \$499. FRANK CLOUSE, Worcester, MA, (508) 798-6737. (15)

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BOB, New Jersey, (908) 506-6695. (15)



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WANTED. Single or double Klepper folding kayak.
TIM STODDART, Minneapolis, MN, (612) 450-6698 home, (800) 328-4086 work. (16)

BOATING MAGAZINES, "Small Boat Journal" and "Wooden Boat", from earliest issues to present. Nearly complete set of each, very few gaps, some duplicates. Best offer.

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SALE OR TRADE 24' medium to heavy displ. cutter, FG hull, beautiful wood interior, classic lines, equipped for cruising in safety & comfort. Asking \$7,000 or trade for shoal draft cruiser on trlr.

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"THE WAR TIME ADVENTURES OF AN ENGLISH SEA PUPPY" by Mike Badham. A 50 page illustrated booklet recounting the WWII experiences of a Royal Navy midshipman in North Atlantic & Mediterranean waters. Available from the author for \$8.95 incl p&h.

MIKE BADHAM, Bay Shore Rd., Bath, ME 04530. (TF)

WHISTLER RADAR, audible type for small boats, compl in exc shape. \$200.
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TRADE 15' CATBOAT, "Minuteman" Cape Cod cat on trlr. Lk new w/too lengthy a list of specifics to run here. Want vintage powerboat (hull must be in gd. cond) and/or O'Day "Sprite" sailboats (bldg my own sailing school fleet). Interesting offers welcome. Inq for more info.

ARTHUR EICKENBERG, 435 Cedar Ln., Fayetteville, GA 30214. (16)

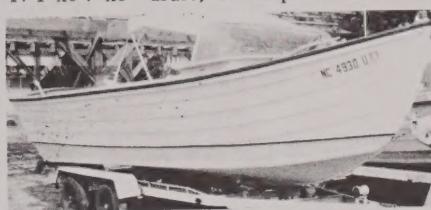
MERCURY 6HP OB, lk new, vy low hrs, \$500.

CHARLES MENDEZ, Wantage, NJ, (201) 875-5661, wkdys 7-9p.m., wknds all day. (16)

VCP SELKIE SEA KAYAK, has skeg, pump & hatch cover. All red, a real nice kayak for \$1,195.
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NAVIGATION INSTRUMENTS. Brand new Walker Taffrail Log (still in box) \$150. Merlin Celestial Navigation computer, lk new, \$90.

TIM STODDART, Minneapolis, MN, (612) 450-6698 home, (800) 328-4086 work. (16)

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NORM THERIAULT, Marblehead, MA, (617) 631-7547. (16)

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12' PORT-A-BOTE, w/sail rig.

DONALD DUQUET, Solomons, MD, (410) 326-4202, 7a.m.-3:30p.m. (16)

BRASS TACKS, flat head canoe style 1-1/8" long. 6 lbs @ \$12/lb. Shipping extra. Used on lapstrakes, etc.

ALBERT KLEINBERG, Waldoboro, ME, (207) 832-5017. (16)

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PAT NAGLE, 2916 S. Quince, Olympia, WA 98501, (206) 357-8283. (16)

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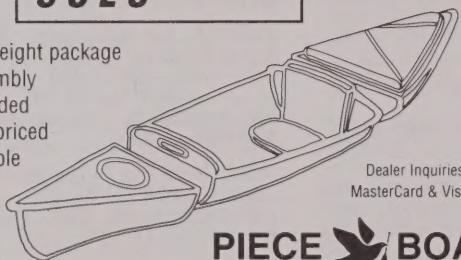
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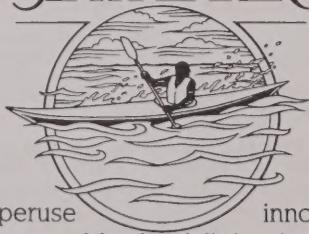
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